



National Institute of Justice

S o l i c i t a t i o n

Julie E. Samuels, Acting Director

September, 2000

Office of Research and Evaluation 2001 Solicitation for Investigator-Initiated Research

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

January 17, 2001

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
810 Seventh Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20531

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For grant and funding information, contact:
Department of Justice Response Center
800-421-6770

Office of Justice Programs
World Wide Web Site:
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov>

National Institute of Justice
World Wide Web Site:
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>

From the Director

Dear Colleague:

I am pleased to present the 2001 Office of Research and Evaluation Solicitation for Investigator-Initiated Research. The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) solicits proposals throughout the year for directed research within specific topic areas. The Investigator-Initiated Solicitation, however, is an open invitation to researchers to explore innovative topics and techniques that will assist in shaping public policies to control crime and enhance justice.

We challenge you to build upon past research and practice as you move forward to advance our efforts to understand and reduce crime. You have free rein to experiment with practical approaches to inform the field and offer alternative ways to solve new, recurring, and continuing problems. We also invite you to collaborate with other disciplines, with practitioners, and the community in the process of improving safety and justice through research.

For additional information on NIJ's research and development priorities please consult, *Building Knowledge About Crime and Justice: The 2000 Research Prospectus of the National Institute of Justice (NCJ 178903)*. Also see *NIJ Awards in Fiscal Year 1999 (NCJ 179016)*; or the NIJ Online Portfolio for an understanding of the types of grants made in the past. These documents may be obtained at the NIJ Web site (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>), or from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (800-851-3420).

We look forward to receiving your application.

Julie E. Samuels
Acting Director
National Institute of Justice

Office of Research and Evaluation

2001 Solicitation for Investigator-Initiated Research

What's New? Changes From Previous Investigator-Initiated Solicitations

- T There will not be a separate investigator-initiated solicitation on the topic of violence against women in 2001. Violence against women, including domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking research proposals are to be submitted under this solicitation.
- T Science & Technology Development proposals are not eligible under this solicitation (see: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm).
- T Policing Research and Evaluation should be submitted under this solicitation.
- T Letters of Intent to submit an application under this solicitation are due by December 17, 2000.
- T The application package has been re-arranged. Now required are a Topics Designation Form, a detailed listing of previous NIJ grant award performance, a privacy certificate, and a Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Form.
- T Deliverables and reporting time lines are being reinforced including final technical reports, data sets, as well as standard progress and financial reports.

I. Introduction

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is the independent research and development arm of the U.S. Department of Justice. Created by Congress in 1968, the Institute is charged with investing public funds to develop knowledge that will reduce crime, enhance public safety, and improve the administration of justice. Enabling legislation authorizes NIJ to assist State and local justice systems in the following ways:

- ! By conducting and sponsoring basic and applied research into the causes, prevention, and detection of crime.
- ! By sponsoring evaluations of major Federal initiatives concerning crime and justice.
- ! By supporting research and demonstrations to develop new approaches, techniques, systems, and equipment to improve law enforcement and the administration of justice.
- ! By developing, validating, and evaluating new technologies to deter crime and enhance criminal justice operations.
- ! By making recommendations to Federal, State, and local governments.
- ! By collecting and disseminating both domestic and international criminal justice information.

Many of today's crime problems require solutions that extend beyond traditional criminal justice boundaries. The Institute continues to promote research collaborations with other Federal agencies and private foundations and has established a variety of research partnerships. Some of these partnerships result in special solicitations for research on specific topics or programs of relevance to both NIJ and partner agencies (e.g. Corrections Program Office, Violence

Against Women Office). Other solicitations encourage collaborative or interdisciplinary research and offer prospects for joint funding. Still others result in the development of shared and specific research agendas.

Letters of Intent

To accommodate the volume of proposals submitted under this and other solicitations, NIJ requests that non-binding letters of intent be received **by December 17, 2000**. The Institute will use these letters to anticipate the number of peer panels needed, and to identify conflicts of interest among potential peer panel reviewers.

There are two ways to notify us of your intent to submit an application: send email to tellnij@ncjrs.org, or send a letter with the same information to: Office of Research and Evaluation, Investigator-Initiated Solicitation, 810 7th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20531. Please indicate the topical area to be addressed along with a statement of intention to submit an application to the **Office of Research and Evaluation, Investigator-Initiated Solicitation**.

NIJ's many directed solicitations are announced throughout the year on NIJ's website, in the Federal Register and on the Justice Information Center website. Interested applicants may also telephone the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) at 800-851-3420 or e-mail askncjrs@ncjrs.com for pending releases and announcement dates.

II. Background

NIJ receives and reviews research proposals that respond to the broad mandate of the Institute's solicitation for investigator-initiated research. Proposals may be submitted under this program to explore topics of relevance to State or local criminal justice policy or practice with potential for informing policy and practice on a national basis, and proposals that fill important gaps in the development of key areas of scientific knowledge. In recent years, the

investigator-initiated solicitation has focused on concerns such as community crime prevention, policing research, juvenile and criminal justice systems improvement, corrections, and alcohol- and drug-related crime and treatment.

Partnerships between researcher and practitioners are encouraged. Collaboration is a critical element of a researcher-practitioner partnership. These applications should address how they will manage activities such as problem definition, development of assessment tools, collection of data, and issues of privacy, confidentiality and research involving human subjects. Additionally, while a proposed partnership may have state or local utility, it should also have implications for national knowledge-building.

Under the investigator-initiated solicitation, NIJ has recently awarded grants ranging from less than \$100,000 to \$300,000 and occasionally more.

NIJ encourages researchers from all disciplines to explore opportunities for collaborative efforts presented in this and directed solicitations.

Research and evaluation proposals on Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women should be submitted under this Investigator-Initiated solicitation. NIJ does not plan to have an open solicitation exclusively for Violence Against Women Research and Evaluation in Fiscal Year 2001. Proposals on any aspect of Violence Against Women may be submitted, *except for those dealing specifically with dual arrests* for which we anticipate a separate solicitation by the spring of 2001. Prospective applicants should monitor the NIJ web site for the specific dates of all announcements. Also, please remember to check the appropriate box on the topics designation form.

III. Selection Criteria

NIJ is firmly committed to a competitive process in making grant awards. Peer review panelists consider both technical and programmatic merits of a proposed topic. Successful applicants must demonstrate to an

S o l i c i t a t i o n

independent peer review panel that: 1) the gap in knowledge they seek to fill is critical to understanding crime and justice and is policy relevant; 2) the proposed research design is rigorous and appropriate to posited research questions; and, 3) principal investigators are highly qualified to execute the design within the proposed budget. Institute staff then make recommendations to the NIJ Director based on the results of the independent reviews. Final decisions are made by the NIJ Director after consultation with Institute staff. Reviews of grant applications are based upon the following criteria:

Impact of the Project

- P Importance of the problem;
- P Potential for significant advances in areas such as crime prevention, law enforcement, courts, corrections;
- P Potential for advancement of scientific understanding of the problem area;
- P Relevance to improving the policy and practice of criminal justice and related agencies and for improving public safety, security, and quality of life.

P Quality and Technical Merit

- P Awareness of existing research;
- P Soundness of methodology, analytic, or technical approach;
- P Innovation and creativity, where appropriate;
- P Feasibility of proposed project and awareness of pitfalls.

Capabilities, Demonstrated Productivity, and Experience of Applicants

- P Qualifications and experience of personnel to proposed project;
- P Demonstrated ability to manage proposed effort;
- P Adequacy of proposed budget including time and personnel;
- P Past performance on NIJ grants and contracts.

Budget Considerations

- P Total cost relative to perceived benefit;
- P Budget appropriate to level of effort;
- P Use of existing resources to conserve costs.

IV. How to Apply

Individuals interested in submitting proposals in response to this solicitation must complete the required application forms and related documents (See below for how to obtain application forms and guides for completing proposals). Applicants must include all of the following information and completed forms to qualify for consideration:

PART A:

- Standard Form (SF 424) - Application for Federal assistance
- Topics Designation Form
- **Proposal abstract**
- Table of contents
- Budget Detail Worksheet
- Budget Narrative
- Negotiated indirect rate agreement (if appropriate)
- **Program narrative**
- References
- Names and affiliations of all key persons including applicants and subcontractor(s), advisors, consultants, and advisory board members. Include name of principal investigator, title, organizational affiliation, department (if institution of higher education), address, phone, fax, and e-mail address.
- List of previous NIJ awards, their status, and products (especially those written, due, or already submitted to NIJ) and publications by NIJ or elsewhere.

PART B:

- Privacy certificate
- Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification/Certification/Declaration (Form 310)
- Environmental Assessment (if required)
- Geographic Areas Affected Worksheet

S o l i c i t a t i o n

- Assurances
- Certifications Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (one form)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
- Appendixes:
 - Letters of cooperation from organizations collaborating in the research project
 - Résumés
 - Other materials

The author(s) of the proposal should be clearly identified. Proposals that are incorrectly collated, incomplete, or handwritten will be considered as submitted or, at NIJ's discretion, will be returned without further review. Proposals exceeding the page limit may not be reviewed. No additions to the original submission are allowed. Applicants should address the questions, issues, and requirements set forth below when preparing an application.

Proposal abstract. The proposal abstract is a very important part of the application. Along with the Topics Designation Form, the abstract is used in sorting applications for appropriate peer review. Once an award has been granted, the abstract is computerized and serves as a summary available to all interested parties for the duration of the grant. When read separately from the rest of the application, the abstract should serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work. Applicants should concisely describe research goals and objectives, research design, and methods for achieving the goals and objectives. Length is not to exceed 400 words. Use the following two headers and instructions to assist in developing the abstract.

Research Goals and Objectives:

Statement of Purpose. State the problem under investigation including goals and objectives of the proposed research project, and anticipated relevance of the project to public policy and/or practice.

Research Subjects. If applicable, describe subjects who will be involved in the proposed project

including the number of participants, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and other pertinent characteristics such as how you will gain access to participants.

Proposed Research Design & Methodology:

Methods. Describe the research method and/or design including data to be used, data collection procedures and instrumentation, secondary data analysis methods, and other methods or procedures unique to the proposed study.

Data Analysis and Products. Describe proposed techniques for data analysis and all expected products including final reports, data to be archived, and instrumentation.

Program Narrative. The program narrative should provide information and detail to adequately describe the proposed project and should include:

- Purpose, goals and objectives
- Review of relevant literature
- Methodology
- Anticipated results and products
- Staff/management plan
- Research time-line

Page limit. The number of pages included in the "Program Narrative" section of the application must not exceed thirty (30), double-spaced pages in 12-point font with one inch margins. Tables, charts and figures are encouraged and will not be counted in the 30 page limitation.

Due date. *Letters of intent must be received at the NIJ by December 17, 2000.* Ten (10) copies (one unbound) of complete proposals **must be received** at the National Institute of Justice by 5:00 p.m. on **January 17, 2001.** Extensions to this deadline are not permitted. Faxed or electronically transmitted copies will not be accepted.

Application Materials. Applicants should obtain two packets: 1) application forms (including a sample budget worksheet); and, 2) guidelines for submitting proposals (including requirements for proposal writers

and requirements for grant recipients). To receive them, applicants can:

- Access the Justice Information Center on the Web (<http://www.ncjrs.org>), or NIJ Web site (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>). These Web sites provide NIJ application forms and guidelines.
- Request hard copies of the forms and guidelines by mail from the NCJRS at 800–851–3420 or from the Department of Justice Response Center at 800–421–6770 (in the Washington, D.C., area, at 202–307–1480).
- Request copies by fax. Call 800–851–3420 and select option 1, then option 1 again for NIJ. Code is 1023.
- **Please note that instructions provided in this announcement supersede those outlined in the document: *Guidelines for Submitting Proposals for National Institute of Justice - Sponsored Research.***

V. Guidelines For Grantees

NIJ has established guidelines for grantees regarding deliverables such as final reports and data sets. **Ninety (90) days prior to the completion of the grant period**, grantees are expected to submit in draft form: a 400 word abstract; a 2,500 word executive summary; and, a technical research report.

Final Deliverables

- Abstract (400 words)
- Executive Summary (2,500 words)
- Technical Report
- Data and supporting documentation

All NIJ draft research reports are peer reviewed upon submission. The reviews are forwarded to the principal investigator with suggestions for revisions. The principal investigator is then required to submit the revised final report, abstract, executive summary,

final data set and codebook/data dictionary. The abstract, executive summary and final report are to be submitted in both paper and electronic/diskette versions. The data set and codebook/dictionary are also to be submitted in electronic form.

Data sets must be received by the grant end date. Grant applicants should ensure that the proposed time line accommodates these requirements. Further, the proposed budget should adequately address these requirements.

In addition to the abstract, executive summary, technical report and data set, grantees are required to submit quarterly financial status reports and semi-annual progress reports.

Financial Status Report

Financial status reports (SF 269-A) are to be submitted quarterly no later than 45 days following the end of each calendar quarter. Two copies of the financial status report must be submitted to the Office of the Comptroller every quarter during which the award is active even if there has been no financial activity during the reporting period.

Additionally, a final financial report is due 120 days after the end date of the award. Future awards and fund drawdowns will be withheld if financial status reports are delinquent.

Semi-annual Progress Report

Recipients of funding are also required to submit semi-annual Categorical Assistance Progress Reports. Two copies of the progress report must be submitted to the Office of the Comptroller twice a year even if there has been no substantive activity during the reporting period. The progress report should describe activities during the reporting period and status or accomplishment of objectives as set forth in the approved application for funding. For the duration of the award, progress reports must be submitted within 30 days after the end of the reporting periods (January 1 through June 30 and July 1 through December 31).

S o l i c i t a t i o n

Additionally, a final progress report providing a summary of achievement of the goals and objectives of the award, significant results, and any products developed under the award, is due 90 days after the end date of the award. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if progress reports are delinquent.

Forms for submitting financial and progress reports are available at the NIJ website. Report formats will also be provided by the Office of Justice Programs at the time of the grant award.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION AND HUMAN SUBJECT PROTECTION

NIJ has adopted new policies and procedures regarding the confidentiality of information and human subjects protection.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) regulations at 28 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 22 require recipients of NIJ research funds to protect personally identifiable information that is collected from all research participants. The regulations at 28 CFR Part 22 require applicants for NIJ funding to outline specific procedures for protection of private information about individuals as part of the Privacy Certificate submitted with the application package.

In addition to the regulations in Part 22, DOJ has adopted policies concerning protection of human subjects which are the same as those established by the Department of Health and Human Services in 45 CFR Part 46, Subpart A, also known as the "Common Rule."

The DOJ regulations are set forth in 28 CFR Part 46. In general, 28 CFR Part 46 requires that all research involving human subjects conducted or supported by a federal department or agency be reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) before federal funds are expended for that research. If IRB approval is required for this project, a copy of the IRB's approval as well as supporting documentation concerning the IRB's institutional affiliation, its policies and procedures, and necessary assurances must be submitted to the National Institute of Justice prior to

the initiation of any research activities that are not exempt from the provisions of 28 CFR Part 46.

Further information regarding Confidentiality and Human Subjects Protections may be found in *Guidelines for Submitting Proposals for National Institute of Justice-Sponsored Research*.

Guidance and information. Applicants who wish to receive additional guidance and information may contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800-421-6770. Center staff can provide assistance or refer applicants to an appropriate NIJ professional. Applicants may, for example, wish to discuss their prospective research topics with the NIJ professional staff.

Send applications to:

Office of Research and Evaluation
Solicitation for Investigator-Initiated Research
National Institute of Justice
810 Seventh Street N.W., Rm. 7324
Washington, DC 20531
[overnight courier ZIP code 20001]

For more information on the National Institute of Justice, please contact:

National Criminal Justice Reference Service
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-851-3420
e-mail: askncjrs@ncjrs.org

You can view or obtain an electronic version of this document from the NCJRS Justice Information Center web site (<http://www.ncjrs.org>) or the NIJ web site (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>).

Topics Designation Form

Please indicate one primary topic area under which this proposal should reviewed.

NOTE: Does the proposed project include a researcher-practitioner partnership? Yes No

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Violence and other criminal behaviors | <input type="radio"/> Drug Treatment, Drug Courts |
| <input type="radio"/> Sex Offenders/Offenses | <input type="radio"/> White-collar, Cyber-Crime |
| <input type="radio"/> Domestic violence and violence against women | <input type="radio"/> Transnational Crime, Organized Crime |
| <input type="radio"/> Victims of crime | <input type="radio"/> Court Operations |
| <input type="radio"/> Crime and delinquency prevention | <input type="radio"/> Adjudication and Sentencing |
| <input type="radio"/> Child abuse and neglect | <input type="radio"/> Corrections <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile <input type="checkbox"/> Adult |
| <input type="radio"/> Juvenile Delinquency | <input type="radio"/> Crime-mapping |
| <input type="radio"/> Policing practices, organization and administration | <input type="radio"/> Spatial Analysis |
| <input type="radio"/> Firearms | <input type="radio"/> Other Thematic Areas: |
| <input type="radio"/> Drugs, Drugs and Crime, Alcohol & Drug Testing | <hr/> |

(Include this form as the second page to the application)